

How to create Cochrane branded infographics

This document provides guidance on how to create Cochrane branded infographics using products such as Piktochart.com and Visually or design software such as Adobe Creative Suite.

Information graphics or infographics are graphic visual representations of information, data or knowledge intended to present information quickly and clearly.

They are an interesting and exciting way to represent graphic content to tell a story. You can also use pictures to highlight the story.

Cochrane groups are exploring ways of using infographics to translate evidence, data and information into easy insights and understanding to internal and external audiences.

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Content and messaging

Before you create your infographic, be clear about:

- Who do I want to reach?
- What do I want to say?
- What's the best form for achieving this?

Cochrane branding: colours, font and styling

Please design your infographics using the correct colours, fonts, themes and styles, stated in the Cochrane Brand Guidelines – Design Toolkit. This may sound restrictive but it's not. Limiting your pallet gives you the opportunity to push your creative thinking and really maximize how Cochrane is perceived online, making it very clear who the infographic is coming from and that there is a strong message and style that can also be shared by other Cochrane groups.

- **Font:** (You can only use) Sources Sans Pro or Arial
- **Colour:** (You can only use) Cochrane Blue + your Cochrane groups secondary colour + white + black + four greys (all colour codes are stated in the Brand Guidelines – Design Toolkit)
- **Logos:** You need to include the Cochrane group logo, and other organization, funder where appropriate

Infographics for beginners

Software options

There are a variety of options for creating infographics from PowerPoint to online tools to design software. Here's a quick description of the main options available:

PowerPoint: PowerPoints main job is to help you create slides, but you can also resize the slides to create posters or infographics and save them as image files. For example, Cochrane UK use a PowerPoint template to create blogshots (see uk.cochrane.org/blogshot-infographic-archive). PowerPoint is a good option if you not wanting to create a standard long infographic and if you don't have access to design software such as Adobe Creative Suite.

Piktochart (piktochart.com) and Easel.ly: Arr online tools specifically for creating and sharing infographics and digital presentations. There are various levels of accounts, the initial versions being free which is all you need to create Cochrane infographics. They provide loads of free templates, but if you want to create a Cochrane infographic you will need to start from scratch to match the Brand Guidelines. Guidance on how to start your infographic is further on is this document. Here some examples of Piktochart infographics we have created:

- <https://magic.piktochart.com/output/6914963-child-health-infographic>
- <https://magic.piktochart.com/output/6916280-cochrane-translations-infographic>
- <https://magic.piktochart.com/output/7164934-caffeine-and-health-evidence-from-cochrane-infographic>

Visually (visual.ly): Is an online tool for getting quotes for other designers to create your infographic. You fill in information about the type of infographic you would like and they provide a list of quotes and designers for you to pick from and work with. This is an option if you are worried about your design ability and you have the resources to outsource the work.

There are also lots of other tools out there that you are free to use.

We suggest if you are new to infographics to make use of the online tools available such as Piktochart or Easel.ly. below we will run through some basics to using Piktochart.

Using Piktochart to create your infographic

It is best to start from a 'create your own infographic' as a blank template.

Font

Piktochart has a selection of fixed fonts, this means we cannot use Source Sans Pro (Cochrane font), instead use Arial for ALL text in your infographic as Arial is Cochrane's secondary font.

Header and footer

The header should always be your landscape Cochrane group logo and the strapline. Make sure you leave the correct amount of white space around the logo, this information is provided in the Brand Guidelines – Design Toolkit. Also make sure the strapline follows the format below: 'Trusted evidence. Informed decisions.' In Cochrane Blue and 'Better health.' in your groups secondary colour.

For example:



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include a footer with your groups website address and social media information, such as your Twitter handle. This means if your infographic is widely shared online, it is easier for the viewer to come back and find out more about Cochrane and perhaps get in touch.

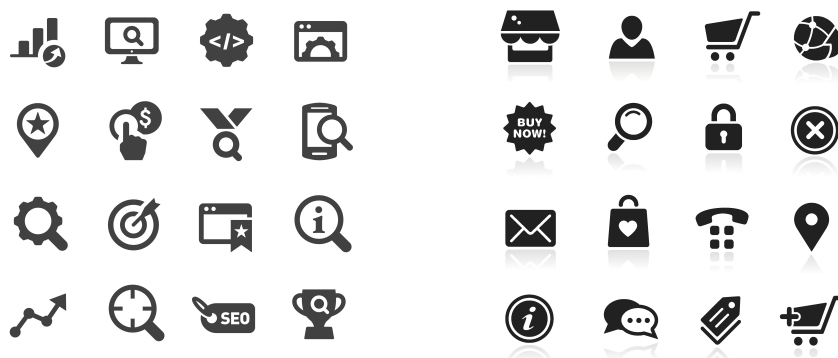
Images

Images selection is a key part of the Brand Guidelines and is something you can use to help illustrate your infographic content alongside graphic icons. See the Piktochart infographic examples listed about, you will see have images have been cropped and used to highlight key points. You can also use abstract images in the background of your infographic. If you are unsure of what type of images you should be using contact cead@lists.cochrane.org and we can give you access to a folder of images that we have selected that match the Brand Guidelines.

Graphics and icons

Using icons can help draw the viewers eye to information as well as using them to help describe the content. Piktochart have a huge selection of free icons that you can use and recolour. You can also download sheets of icons from iStock.com, like the two sheets

below. (if you would like access to the Cochrane iStock account, please contact cead@lists.cochrane.org).



Linking content

It's really important that if your infographic is about a particular review or advertising one of your projects that you reference your sources and provide links from the infographic to the specific URLs, so the viewers can find further information. Infographics are a great way of improving your reviews impact online, one great example is over 850 click throughs to the new portion size review occurred from Cochrane UK's series of infographics about the review in the first three weeks. In Piktochart it is very easy to add live links to your content and they will be highlighted if you embed your infographic in your website, so viewers will know to click on it.

It is worth using a short link tool like bit.ly so you can capture click throughs to you content.

Publishing and sharing your infographic

Once you're ready to publish your infographic online, download it as an image file (i.e. PNG) as well as publishing it on Piktochart. This gives you lots of different options for sharing the infographic. Here are some suggestions:

- You can send people to the URL
- You could embed the infographic code into your website
- You could share the PNG file on Twitter

The main text and layout of your infographic is up to you. We are unable to provide a Piktochart template, but we have lots of infographic examples we can send you, to take inspiration from. It is also worth looking at the Design Toolkit in the Brand Guidelines as well as the other Cochrane templates to get a feel for our brand style and for further information as to how to use font, colour and images.

Infographics for advanced users

Software options

Adobe Illustrator, InDesign or Photoshop are good options for graphic designers and those familiar with creating infographics. To see an example of an infographic made in InDesign and Photoshop, click here: <http://www.evidentlycochrane.net/portion-size/>.

We will be producing a Cochrane infographic template for the Adobe Creative Suite soon.

Infographic sizing

Infographics are for sharing online, so make sure the width of your infographic is 800 or 1000 pixels, this is the average width of a page online. They can be any height, depending on the amount of content you have.

Design tips

If you are comfortable with creating infographics, you will have fun playing around with the use of branding. Remember to stick to the Brand Guidelines, this doesn't need to restrict your creative flair but means that Cochrane stays as a theme throughout, making it easier for your audience to know where your content has come from and who you are representing.

Also take note of the design tips we have added to the 'Infographics for beginners' section.

Think about:

- Do you want to use just graphics or a mixture of graphics and stock images?
- Can you divide your content into sections using your brand colour pallet?
- Can you add charts/graphics to help illustrate key figures?

Design checklist

Before you publish your infographic have you included the following items?

- Have you only used Source Sans Pro or Arial?
- Have you stuck to the correct colour pallet?
- Have you previewed your infographic to check layout and sizing?
- Have you included referenced your sources and added links where necessary?
- Is your Cochrane group logo and any funder/host logos (if needed) included?
- Is the Cochrane tagline included?
- Have you added your social media details to the footer?
- Have you got a way of tracking data such as click throughs from your infographic that could be used in your impact report?

Useful links

<http://visuallycochrane.net/2015/05/22/some-ideas-for-further-development/>

<http://visuallycochrane.net/2015/09/16/from-ideas-to-action-the-story-behind-one-cochrane-infographic/>

<http://www.bmj.com/infographics>

<https://github.com/joelkuiper/personograph>

<https://projects.exeter.ac.uk/infographics/thesis/index.php>

<http://isof.epistemonikos.org/#/>

Cochrane has just started to produce guidance on infographic design. We will keep adding to this guidance as well as working on templates for groups to use, which will be available soon.

You can also seek further guidance from the Communications and External Affairs Department (CEAD). CEAD can also provide an Adobe InDesign template for those who would like one: cead@lists.cochrane.org